GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3389
ANSWERED ON:16.04.2008
DEATHS DUE TO POLLUTION
Vijay Krishna Shri

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether as per the report of the World Health Organisation (WHO), around five lakh persons most of them women and children are killed every year in India due to the pollution caused by burning of wood, coal and dung in rural areas;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE(SMT. PANABAKA LAKSHMI)

(a) to (c) World Health Organisation's report 'Indoor Air Pollution - National burden of diseases estimates' mentions that in India, around 4.07 lakh premature deaths can be attributed annually to use of biomass fuel and coal. According to a report of Indira Gandhi Institute for Development Research, it is estimated that 4.1 lakh to 5.7 lakh women and young children die prematurely every year due to indoor air pollution caused by burning of bio-fuels in poorly ventilated homes.However,no conclusive data is available to establish the correlation between the mortality and indoor air pollution.

The Government through the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy has taken various steps to control and prevent indoor air pollution, through National Programme on Biogas Development to provide alternatives to burning firewood, agricultural residues, cattle dung and coal as fuel. National Programme on Improved Chulhas has also been taken up to promote thermally efficient and low smoke stoves/smokeless chulhas.IEC activities through electronic and print media are undertaken to give publicity to the programmes.Women Education programmes are also organized in villages to generate awareness about the hazards of burning firewood, agricultural wastes, cattle dung in traditional chulhas and benefits of the biogas technology etc.